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ABSTRACT

A nine-member Future of Teaching Committee, appointed by the State Board of Education in October of 1985, suggests a sweeping set of recommendations to provide 20,000 new teacher replacements in Michigan's public school classrooms in the next several years. An overview is presented of the Committee's recommendations to the Governor, the Legislature, the State Board of Education, colleges and universities, and local school districts. The recommendations are designed to accomplish several objectives, including: (1) suggestions to ensure sufficient financial investment in teachers and teacher education; (2) suggestions for recruiting the most committed, caring and talented teachers; (3) methods of providing quality school leadership through better trained administrators; (4) steps to ensure quality teacher education; and (5) suggestions aimed at providing appropriate physical conditions and a professional climate in the schools. (JD)

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ED276704

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE FUTURE OF TEACHING IN MICHIGAN

SEIZING THE OPPORTUNITY: A TIME FOR COMMITMENT

A Report from the
Future of Teaching Committee

Presented to the
Michigan State Board of Education

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SP 028 344

A nine-member Future of Teachers Committee, appointed by the State Board of Education in October of 1985, suggests a sweeping set of recommendations to provide 20,000 new teacher replacements in Michigan's public school classrooms in the next several years.

Although the Committee predicts the nation is on the threshold of a major teacher shortage, its report to the State Board of Education also predicts the shortage of teachers in Michigan will be more selective and not as severe as the national shortage.

The Committee's recommendations to the Governor, the Legislature, the State Board of Education, colleges and universities and local school districts are designed to accomplish several objectives. These include:

1.) Suggestions to ensure sufficient financial investment in teachers and teacher education;

2.) Suggestions for recruiting the most committed, caring and talented teachers;

3.) Methods of providing quality school leadership though better-trained administrators;

4.) Steps to ensure quality teacher education, and

5.) Suggestions aimed at providing appropriate physical conditions and a professional climate in the schools.

The Committee's report urges a state investment in teachers and teacher education. It said the Governor should take these three steps:

1.) Establish a "blue ribbon" State Commission on School Finance and Quality Education. The goals of such a Commission would be to develop state strategies for achieving equity in school finance, curriculum opportunities for students and teacher compensation. The report said: "Teacher's salaries and the financial support of quality education cannot be divorced from each other...this issue is so big and so important that it requires a separate commission."

2.) Convene Michigan's higher education leadership and members of the State Board of Education to develop strategies for supporting and improving the quality of teacher education. That higher education leadership should include college and university presidents, trustees, and the deans of education, arts and sciences and graduate schools.

3.) Enlist the support of college and university presidents to work with their faculties to strengthen teacher education programs.

The Committee report contained a number of recommendations to the

Michigan Legislature. Legislative recommendations include:

1.) Establish a Technical Assistance Fund for Teacher Education to allow the State Board of Education to implement standards of quality for teacher and administrator education.

2.) Earmark a minimum of 5% of funds from the State School Aid Act for teacher professional development programs.

3.) Require state colleges and universities to present an annual fiscal statement of support for teacher education to the Governor and House/Senate Appropriations Committees of the Legislature.

4.) Establish an urban/rural schools "Marshall Plan" on teaching to initiate recruitment strategies to attract and retain qualified teachers for both urban and rural schools. Such a plan should involve the joint cooperation of educators and business, labor and community leaders.

5.) Establish Michigan future teacher scholarship and loan programs targeted for teacher shortages. Such programs should be based on certain criteria, such as subject areas, geographic areas and special populations.

6.) Establish a Pre-Teaching Corps (PTC) in every Michigan school district to recruit, as members, talented high school and junior high school students who show potential for teaching.

7.) Establish a state plan for school administrator professional development and designate funds for such training as part of the State Aid Act.

8.) Appropriate sufficient funding for the implementation of a system of certification for school administrators and standards of quality for school administrator preparation.

9.) Provide competitive grants for teacher-led research though collaborative efforts of classroom teachers and university faculty. Such research should focus on in-school inquiry on problems affecting teaching and learning.

10.) Implement the School Improvement Hours (SIH) incentive concept. This concept would enable local school districts to elect university faculty members who would provide direct-to-the-classroom assistance. For each 10 hours a faculty member contributes to a local school classroom teacher, the state would reimburse the university with funding equal to one graduate hour of credit.

A major portion of the report contains a number of recommendations to the State Board of Education. Included are:

1.) Establishment of a Professional Standards Board. Such a Board would establish standards and examinations for entry and advancement in the profession; develop a Code of Ethics for the teaching profession; establish standards for certification of mentor teachers, and develop mechanisms for administering examinations, processing certification applications and enforcing standards of quality.

2.) Establishment of a four-tier teaching career ladder system within every school system. The Committee recommends four teaching levels:

   a.) internship (in the initial year of teaching)
   b.) provisional level
   c.) continuing level
   d.) master teacher level.

3.) Establishment of rigorous standards of quality for teacher education programs.

4.) Establishment of rigorous admission criteria and requirements for admission into teacher education programs.

5.) Establishment of mentor teacher training programs and award certification to graduates of such programs.

6.) Seek legislation to establish financial incentives for local school districts to provide teachers with extended year opportunities for professional development, curriculum/instruction projects and special student services programs.

7.) Seek legislation to implement the School Improvement Hour (SIH) concept to increase higher education faculty participation in K-12 school improvement efforts.

8.) Implement the high school and junior high school Pre-Teaching Corps (PTC) by:

   a.) developing guidelines for such a Corps in every Michigan school district;
   b.) providing a system of recognition to local districts for outstanding achievements with PTC members;
   c.) providing special recognition to PTC members who annually volunteer 100 hours or more to any school district;
   d.) establish a model to develop collaboration among education organizations, business/industry, higher education, local school district parents, economic development councils and legislators to encourage students to join the Pre-Teaching Corps.

9.) Establish and fund State Board of Education teacher forums to involve teachers in the identification and formulation of educational policy issues in the state.

10.) Sponsor and implement school administrator forums to provide a means for administrators to discuss issues and make recommendations for state education policy actions.

11.) Develop a systematic and comprehensive teacher supply and demand information system.

12.) Establish standards of quality for school administrator preparation.

13.) Provide leadership to establish school district-university teacher exchanges.

Recommendations to Michigan colleges and universities include the following:

1.) Ensure that each college or university responsible for preparing teachers establishes a Board of Visitors. Such a Board should consist of representatives from within the college/university preparing teachers, from business and industry, from local and intermediate school districts and from parents and citizen groups. The Board of Visitors should be utilized to advise on the design, approval and continuous evaluation and development of teacher education.

2.) Require a one to three year carefully supervised internship, under supervision of a mentor teacher, to induct teachers into the profession.

3.) Develop career options for teachers by establishing a teacher mentor program. A teacher mentor would spend approximately one-half of his/her time in the classroom. The teacher mentor would supervise and evaluate teacher interns, develop and maintain cooperative relationships with teacher education programs, conduct inservice education and help design field-based research studies on teaching and learning.

4.) Develop teacher education programs which emphasize mastery of subject matter and teaching skills. It is recommended, by the Committee, that two-thirds of the teacher education program consist of general education and content courses. Teachers in Michigan should be well prepared in the liberal arts and sciences.

5.) Require field-based experiences throughout the teacher education programs. Such well-supervised experiences should be completed in a variety of urban and suburban or rural settings.

6.) Colleges or universities that provide teacher education should allocate a fair share of the institution's resources to teacher education programs. A clear and accurate analysis of the university's financial support of teacher education should be presented in an annual financial statement to the Department of Management and Budget, and to the House and Senate Committees on Education and Appropriations.

7.) College/university faculty load formulas should be adjusted to accommodate and recognize the heavy demands and intensive clinical supervision of teacher education students.

Recommendations to <u>local school districts</u> include:

1.) Establishment of scholarship or loan programs for students who have potential as teachers in subject areas where shortages exist.

2.) Establishment of parent awareness programs on the benefits of teaching as a career.

3.) Development of plans to ensure that students are provided appropriate information on the value of teaching as a career, as well as the availability of scholarships and loans.

4.) Development of a plan for school administrator staff development.

5.) Provide adequate resources for administrator professional development.

6.) Development of career options for teachers by establishing a teacher mentor program. A teacher mentor would spend approximately one half of his/her time in the classroom. The mentor would supervise and evaluate teacher interns, develop and maintain cooperative relationships with teacher education programs, conduct inservice training and help design field-based research studies on teaching and learning. (Funds for this should be appropriated by the Legislature.)

7.) Establishment of a local committee to audit the professional and physical condition of schools. This committee should consist of parents, teachers, administrators and students.

8.) Enhancement of the prestige of the teaching profession by sponsoring public awareness programs about student learning, local media campaigns, public forums, etc.

The Committee identified several significant trends which indicate that there will be a dramatic increase in the supply of teacher candidates available to Michigan school districts. These trends include:

a.) A tripling of the number of out-of-state candidates seeking Michigan certification. The current rate of applications could result in more than 3,000 out-of-state candidates being added to the state's teacher employment pool.

b.) A 40% to 70% increase in teacher education enrollments in Michigan's colleges and universities, which will double the number of new graduates in education in a few years.

c.) A 75% increase in the number of individuals seeking to renew or reinstate a Michigan teaching certificate.

The report said: "The combination of supply and demand suggests that the teacher shortage in Michigan will be more selective and not as dramatic or severe as the national situation. It is equally clear that these trends indicate that the most significant teacher supply and demand issue confronting Michigan is quality."

Members of the Future of Teaching Committee include: Geraldine Kiessel (Chair), Principal, Garden City Junior High; Judy Dobbert (1984 Teacher of the Year), Teacher, Albion Public Schools; John Elliott, President, Detroit Federation of Teachers; Arthur Frook, Superintendent, Midland Public Schools; George Garver, former Superintendent, Livonia Public Schools (Retired, June, 1986); Mary Kay Kosa, Past President, Michigan Education Association, Teacher, Monroe Public Schools; George McCloud, Acting Dean, Graduate School, Eastern Michigan University; Gerald Pine, Dean, School of Human and Education Services, Oakland University; and Marvell Vannest (1983 Teacher of the Year), Director of Curriculum, Kalkaska Public Schools.

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